EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE TEACHING OF AMERICAN HISTORY NEEDS EMPHASIS IN OUR SCHOOLS—STUDENTS LACK KNOWLEDGE—NEW YORK TIMES TEST PROVES STUDIES ARE INADEQUATE

HON. JENNINGS RANDOLPH

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Tuesday, September 7, 1976

Mr. RANDOLPH. Mr. President, during the past 8 months, Americans have been treated to a sweeping review of our Nation's history. The spectacular public events and historical displays have, through the media, reached almost every citizen during this Bicentennial Year. Our reverence for the past instills in our hearts enthusiasm and pride for the world-shaking events of 200 years ago. The Bicentennial teaches us that America has known many periods of doubt and despair. We have experienced wars, depressions, upsurges in crime and violence, plagues and poverty. And America has survived.

It is these lessons of the past which must serve as an inspiration and guiding force for the future. There exists in America today too little true understanding of our creation of freedom and individual liberty. We should be aware that the Declaration of Independence was not so much a rebellion against foreign tyranny but rather a revolution for freedom.

From several educational sources, we learn that today's high school students have insufficient knowledge of our American history. In junior high, our youth should be given stimulating courses or classes in our national history.

If the past is prolog, there are indications that there may be serious implications for our Nation's future in the educational system today. The New York Times reported earlier this year that a nationwide test of first-year college students shows that they generally know the high points of American history, but that their knowledge of the details and the context of these epochal events does not run deep. Reporters Edward B. Fiske and Jonathan Friendly, in an excellent three-part series, concluded that the more students know about American history, the more likely they are to think of the past in positive terms. And the less they know, the more likely they are to cite negative characteristics about our Nation's past.

Analyzing results — Dr. Benjamin Quarles of Morgan State College—one of a group of historians who assisted in preparing the test, commented:

> If this is the state of knowledge of American history, what can one anticipate about knowledge of the history of the rest of the world.

As a student of American history, I confess to personal bias. As a former college teacher, I know that today's student has much to absorb in the assimilation of new knowledge. But I share the concern of many educators that schools are not doing the job they used to do or that they are paid to do. Parents are asking if it is true that the schools are not teaching children to spell correctly, to write grammatically correct sentences, to divide accurately, or remember important events of history. In the area of "social studies," there is a tendency to excise what is considered relevant and discard the rest. Facts give way to concepts, and history is revised to fit the popular objectives of the moment.

Last year, in doing research on the approaching Bicentennial, I was astonished to learn that there was not a single course being taught throughout this country about the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence. This is no longer the case. At Davis and Elkins College, in my hometown of Elkins, W. Va., a special course: "The Signers of the Declaration of Independence" has been conducted for two terms by Dr. Thomas R. Ross, chairman of the department of history. I was privileged to assist in initiating this unique study, which Dr. Ross describes as giving "special emphasis to a study of the careers of the members of the committee who wrote the document * * *."

This is a step toward the general public understanding of the miracle of America, and a continuing awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. An immediate knowledge of the weakness of teaching in American history in our Nation's schools is contained in the results of the New York Times' test. I ask unanimous consent that the series, together with analyses of particularly distressing results, be printed in the Extensions of Remarks.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TIMES TEST OF COLLEGE FRESHMEN SHOWS KNOWLEDGE OF AMERICAN HISTORY LIMITED

(By Edward B. Fiske)

A nationwide test of college freshmen conducted by The New York Times shows that they generally know the high points of American history but that their knowledge of the details and the context of these epochal events does not run deep.

The survey contradicts the widely held view of young Americans as profoundly ignorant of their country's past, but it discloses that they lack the kind of detailed information that historians say they must have to understand either the past or the present.

Overall, the 1,856 freshmen tested earlier this year at 194 campuses correctly answered an average of 21 of the 42 questions on the New York Times American History Knowledge and Attitude Survey.

At the high end, 138 students correctly answered 30 questions or more; at the low end, 215 freshmen did not get even 15 questions right. The highest score was 41, achieved by only one student.

The type of high points they knew is indicated by the fact that a large majority knew the content of the Bill of Rights and recognized the Louisiana Purchase. Two out of three, however, had a fundamental misconception about the origins of religious toleration and the nature of Reconstruction.

KNOWLEDGE OF RIGHTS

Bernard Bailyn of Harvard, one of four prominent historians who assisted in preparing the test, said of this pattern that the students "respond to the Bill of Rights in terms of general notions, cliches and so forth, but they don't know specific documentary information that would give them a right answer on the Constitution."

His views were echoed in the comments of the other historians—C. Vann Woodward of Yale, William E. Leuchtenburg of Columbia and Benjamin A. Quarles of Morgan State College. And Dr. Woodward added: "Students expect to do well and are shocked that they don't. And they think that they've done well in whatever course they had. But these questions would seem to show us that they haven't."

BICENTENNIAL MEASURE

The survey was administered earlier this year by Educational Testing Service, the Princeton, N.J., organization that develops the College Boards and other major academic tests. The goal of The Times was to measure in this Bicentennial year the level of historical knowledge of an important segment of the population: the college freshman who may be the future national leaders.

Among the other major findings derived from the test and from interviews with students, educators and historians are the following:

Freshmen do not know as much about American history as they or their high school teachers think they should. And they do substantially worse than a group of well-known Americans who took part of the test.

Students' knowledge is on a par with that of freshmen in 1943 who took a Times history test that demanded much more detailed factual knowledge than the new test. The newspaper reported then that its test showed students had a "striking ignorance" of American history, a conclusion that led to heated debate among educators and politicians and to an increase in requirements that high schools teach the subject.

There has been decreasing emphasis on American history as a distinct discipline and a drift in the way it is being taught—from emphasis on factual detail toward a more thematic and in some cases analytic approach. The new approach appeals to some kinds of students and seems to be related to how well they do on the test. But the "conceptual" method does not work for all students, nor is it used in all schools.

Male students do better than female students and whites do better than blacks, performance differences that show up in other national history tests. The black performance tends to relate strongly to socio-ecnomic factors and type of high school instructions measured by The Times test, but the women's Times test, but one likely factor in women's lower scores was their generally lower interest in the subject.

The survey was divided into three parts; a first section of 24 basic questions, a second group of 18 that required more detailed knowledge and a final section that dealt with student attitudes toward history and how it was taught to them.

Students achieved an average score of 13.5, or 56 percent, on the basic questions, but their performance dropped to only 7.5, or 42 percent on the more detailed group.

The highest score—92 percent—came on a question in which students were asked to

identify Henry Ford as the business leader who pioneered the mass-production assembly line. The lowest—16 percent—came on the most recent topic when students were asked about parallels between the Korean and Vietnamese Wars.

Standards obviously differ on what constitutes a good score. In analyzing the results, the panel of historians who served as advisers on the test tended to feel that students had done well on any question that 55 to 60 percent answered correctly. However, they set a higher standard for some of the easier questions.

OTHERS INVOLVED

The Times also asked the social science coordinators or history chairman in 18 high schools in and around six American cities—New York; Los Angeles; Miami; Austin, Tex.; Portland, Me.; and Des Moines, Iowa—to evaluate the test.

They said that a typical college-bound graduate of their school ought to get at least 30 questions, or a score of about 70 percent. In fact, less than one student in 12 did.

Apart from the overall scores on the Times survey, a number of patterns emerged in the type of knowledge students have. For one thing, they achieved relatively good scores on high points of American history like famous documents and epochal events.

Nearly three-quarters, for instance, knew whether the Bill of Rights provided for "freedom of enterprise," and 84 percent were familiar with the Louisiana Purchase and other territories acquired in this way.

More than three-quarters know how English colonization differed from that of the French and the Spanish, and 68 percent identified the background of the 1954 Supreme Court decision on desegregation.

There were also, however, some startling gaps in their knowledge. Thirty-six percent, for instance, thought that the Puritans guaranteed religious freedom in Massachusetts, and they outnumbered the 34 percent who correctly replied that religious toleration in the British colonies grew out of the common interest of numerous sects in preventing any one of them from becoming dominant.

Dr. Bailyn called this response "absolutely shocking" and declared, "I don't know how to explain it."

Dr. Quarles suggested that perhaps "the Puritan has temporarily a better image than he would have in a non-Bicentennial year."

A third of the high school history educators said, however, that they would not expect a graduate to get this question nor a subsequent one on Reconstruction. This suggests that the topic is not deeply explored at the secondary-school level.

Another area of widespread ignorance was the Constitution. Only slightly more than a quarter knew which of four specific powers it gives to Congress. Nearly a half (46 percent) were under the misapprehension that it gives courts the power to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional.

There were also some striking contrasts in the level of knowledge on related subjects. Whereas a majority of 58 percent correctly identified the issue of slavery in the territories as the major political issue of the decade before the Civil War, only 37 percent knew the attitude of Jacksonian Democrats toward slavery 30 years before and only 29 percent understood the nature of Reconstruction.

A substantial majority of 61 percent knew the nature of the essential changes brought about by the New Deal, but only 31 percent were able to point out on a later question that collective bargaining became widespread during this period.

"They respond to the Bill of Rights in terms of general notions, cliches and so forth," said Dr. Bailyn. "But they don't know specific documentary information that would give you a right answer on the Constitution. The cliche of the Declaration of Independence they know. But they don't know what the provisions of the Federal Constitution are."

On the other hand, Dr. Quarles saw a positive aspect to the latter point. "It seems to me that their knowledge of the Bill of Rights and the Declaration indicates that they're aware of the rights of the individual to a far greater extent than they are aware of the rights of the Federal Government—or the limitations of the Federal Government. I think that's a hopeful sign. They know the rights of the individual."

The results produced conflicting data about students' sense of chronology. On the one hand, they did fairly well in describing the waves of immigration. On the other hand, only 19 percent were able to put the Federal policy of "assimilating" Indians into white society in its proper time period, less than half were able to pick out monopolies as a major concern of progressives during the first two decades of the 20th century.

"LACKS CONTINUITY"

Dr. Quarles said that the lack of depth of students' knowledge combined with their mixed performance on questions involving chronology suggested that what the history students were being taught "lacks continuity."

"It's centered around a few major issues, and they use history to illustrate that issue," he said. "They will get a big Supreme Court decision like Dred Scott or Brown v. the Board of Education, but they will not know the real setting of that at all."

"They could tell you the decision. They could relate it to black rights or lack of black rights, but they really couldn't place the judges in their social setting. They couldn't place the nature of the decision. They might tell you, for example, that the Dred Scott decision happened in 1834 or 1835 without seeing that it must have happened in 1957 on the eve of the war. They do not have the sense of development, of continuity, of one thing leading to another and unfolding."

Dr. Leuchtenburg was even more critical. "The main conclusion one must draw is unmistakable: that this group of students knows remarkably little American history," he said.

"Their knowledge of the Colonial period is primitive. Two-thirds do not have the foggiest notion of Jacksonian Democracy. Less than half even know that Woodrow Wilson was President during World War I.

"If this is the state of knowledge of American history, what can one anticipate about knowledge of the history of the rest of the world?"

HIGH SCHOOLS CUT PRIORITY FOR TEACHING U.S. HISTORY

(By Edward B. Fiske)

American high schools are giving decreasing priority to the teaching of American history, and in what they do teach there has been a gradual shift away from traditional factual content toward the teaching of basic "concepts."

These changes have also been coupled with a proliferation of films, minicourses, simulation games, fashion shows and do-it-yourself history projects that are also helping to push aside the old-style chronological textbook.

The effects of the new teaching style, however, are uncertain and have become a matter of considerable debate in educational circles.

Some educators say that the changes as a whole—and the "concepts" approach in particular—have had the effect of fostering historical illiteracy among American young people. Others, however, argue that the innovations are positive and that, if historical knowledge is not on the rise, it is largely because of the cultural climate beyond the classroom.

The New York Times American History Knowledge and Attitude Survey, which was administered in February to 1,856 college freshmen on 194 campuses across the country, provides evidence to bolster the argument of both sides.

The data supported critics in that they showed that while students were generally familiar with "peak" events such as the signing of the Declaration of Independence, they had relatively little working knowledge of the context—the historical "substances"—in which these events occurred.

One-third of the test respondents, for example, thought that the chief aim of Colonial resistance on the eve of the Revolution was representation in Parliament rather than self-taxation. Two-thirds were unfamiliar with why the Articles of Confederation were criticized in the 1780's.

Other data, on the other hand, supported proponents of the new "concepts" approach. Students who said that they had been exposed often to "concepts" teaching had an average score of 23 questions right in comparison to the overall average of 21, a difference that analysts at Educational Testing Service in Princeton, N.J., regard as statistically significant.

Not surprisingly, however, the very top scores were not necessarily those who had the most contact with concepts, but rather history "buffs" who reported exposure to all kinds of approaches, from traditional facts to "methods of historical inquiry."

Some educators raised the question of whether—for all the rhetoric—very many teachers were in fact teaching "concepts." Donald Bragaw, chief of the bureau of social studies education for the New York State Education Department, suggested that many who say they are doing so are simply replacing "facts" with "terms."

Others, going further, say that some of the recent changes have been misguided.

A SPRINKLING OF FACTS

"Maybe it's time to come back to the center and try to make history more interesting but still throw in just a few facts from time to time to corrupt the beauty of empty generalizations," said Elspeth D. Rostow, a dean at the University of Texas.

This interdisciplinary trend is evident at the Harry S. Truman High School in Co-op City in the Bronx. In line with New York State requirements, students must take one year of "American studies." In doing this they have a choice of taking a year-long chronological history course or putting together a package of four nine-week courses such as government, social pluralism, foreign policy and "American values and culture."

Daniel Roselle, an editor at the National Council for the Social Studies, agreed that one result of the lack of focus on history per se had been a "lessening of the substance" that students receive about American history. "They won't know who Grover Cleveland is," he declared.

A growing number of social science educators, however, believe that what has traditionally passed for "substance"—especially such things as names and dates—is in reality superficial. The result has been a major change in the objectives of teaching American history.

"In the 1960's people realized that it was impossible for students to remember all those facts and that a lot of students were bored," said Mr. Roselle. "So they said; 'Let's help them to inquire and think!" They will be doing this the rest of their lives. It will also help them with values and current problems."

This shift is also reflected in the difference between a 1943 test administered by The Times—largely oriented toward names and dates—and the new survey. But analysis showed that student performances had not changed substantially.

Many teachers now say that their goal is to teach "concepts." By this they mean ideas and broad themes that characterize the American experience—such as revolution, assimilation of immigrants and free enterprise—rather than traditional factual material.

This movement from facts to concepts is apparent in the number of teachers in all parts of the country who are organizing courses around "themes." At Capital High School in Matross, Mont., for instance, the basic history course is organized around six themes, including one entitled "America and Economics" in which students learn about "big business" and "big labor."

The New York State Education Department suggests that schools base their American studies program around five themes: the American people, the economic system, the political system, cultural institutions and foreign policy.

In the late 1960's the trend toward concepts and themes was reinforced by pressure from students and others to relate teaching content more directly to the social issues of the day. This led to a proliferation of "minicourses" on subjects thought to be of particular interest to students.

The result is that many high school course listings look like college catalogues. At Hillcrest High School in Queens, for instance, students can choose from 23 history electives ranging from classical topics such as "The Civil War" to new ones like "Women in American History."

Many of these minicourses focused on black, Jewish and other kinds of ethnic history, a trend that has been picked up by virtually every important textbook publisher.

The most highly developed form of the shift away from the teaching of chronological fact has been the so-called "inquiry" approach that developed out of the educational theories of Jerome Bruner and others. Working primarily in the natural sciences and later in anthropology and related social sciences, they asserted that every discipline had an underlying "structure" and that the goal of teaching is to help students "discover" this structure.

These ideas were applied to history by Edwin Fenton of Carnegie-Mellon University, who said that students should be thought of as embryonic historians working with original sources, collecting evidence and drawing their own conclusions about people and events. In addition to basic knowledge, he said that the teacher should teach "inquiry skills" as well.

At the Paul D. Schreiber High School in Port Washington, L.I., for instance, Jonathan Harris deals with the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan by putting his students through a mock trial of President Truman.

"They do research, role play and learn to apply what they learn," he said. "They learn more from spending two weeks on this one subject than they ever did with the old method of cramming them with facts."

DISCOVERING METHODS

The last four questions on the Times survey were directly aimed at measuring students' familiarity with the discovery methods of teaching history, and the students averaged about two correct.

Given census information on a "small town in Ohio in the early 19th century," for instance, only one in three was able to place it correctly on a chronological spectrum of industrial growth. On the last question only 31 percent were able to identify the "best evidence of social mobility" from a list of four criteria.

Relatively few students, of course, have had very much exposure to "methods" teaching, but even those who said that they had did not do significantly better than the average on these questions.

While the objectives of teaching American history were changing, so were the techniques used to carry them out. For one thing, the days of the single chronological textbook with questions at the end of the chapter seem numbered.

At Westhill, for example, Carl Marino gives one class a traditional "narrative" text in tandem with an "interpretative" text that deals with a number of specific issues, such as Puritanism. Both are then supplemented freely with paperbacks.

Nonliterary materials are also invading the history classroom. At Santa Monica High School in California, Kenneth Keasley uses everything from lectures and records to videotapes and simulation games.

"In my course on the world wars," he reported, "I use a fictitious map and countries and let students figure out various solutions to the underlying problems of the period."

Some say that the passion for "relevance" has reached absurd proportions. Michelle Stevents, a student at Grace King High School in Metairie, La., for instance, noted that her class had put on a fashion show in the course of studying the modern era. "Now is that history?" she asked.

Several teachers reported that, with declining social ferment, schools are pulling back from heavy reliance on mini-courses. In many cases, they are maintained for less able students, but those in the college-bound tracks are directed to more traditional survey courses with considerable factual content.

"You have to tie your approach to what the student can handle," said Jeff Atwood, a teacher at Westhill. "The better students can handle dates. They need them more so that they can have a more complete understanding of history and society."

There seems to be little retreating, however, from the "thematic" approach, and some educators regard this as unfortunate on the ground that it tends to leave students with little sense of chronology.

"It's almost comical," said Jerry West, a professor of American Thought and Language at Michigan State, "Who knows where they'd place Theodore Roosevelt in time. Maybe somewhere near Grant. The way they're being taught now is too general, too simple and too easy. It's a good idea, a coming idea. But the execution is poor."

Others, however, say that the new goals promote a sense of chronology because each time students go through a particular theme they encounter the same basic "periods" of American history.

ISOLATING ASPECTS

Closely related is the charge that the "new social studies" fragments the subject.

"Thematic studies are useful," said Paul Varge of Michigan State. "But the moment you take them, you're taking only one small aspect of history and are isolating that aspect from the rest of society. The students get little sense of the interaction and conflicts that took place throughout history."

Some teachers complain that some students may not be capable of handling "concepts." Philip J. Gibbons, head of the social studies department at Jamaica Plains High School in Boston, explained that he tried to do this in his course on World War II through a combination of lectures, filmstrips, and independent research projects.

"Then I give them an exam and ask about the causes of the war, and I get single-word answers like 'militarism, armaments race and problems of have and have-not nations,' " he said. "They put down a concept, but they don't understand it. It's disappointing."

Bernard Bailyn, a professor of history at Harvard who served as a consultant on the Times survey suggested that, for all the talk about "concepts," teaching has not changed all that much.

While teachers may be dealing with ideas instead of facts, he suggested, they are still teaching by "enumeration."

"The kids have dealt with the enumeration the same way they deal with the facts," he said. "They put it in their books, and they memorize it."

STUDENTS' VIEW OF HISTORY EMPHASIZES THE POSITIVES

(By Edward B. Fiske)

A New York Times survey of 1,856 college freshmen found that students had a generally positive view of their national heritage.

While they find negative as well as positive attributes in American history, they generally think of qualities like "opportunity" and "democracy" as more characteristic of this history than negative ones like "repression" or "immorality." They cite events such as the Emancipation Proclamation as more in keeping with the national character than assassinations and scandals.

By far the most commonly selected quality was "materialism." Ninety-two percent thought that this was either "very" or "somewhat" characteristic of the country, with two-thirds of them putting it in the "very" category. Analysis of how students answered other questions suggested that materialism was not thought of as a "negative" quality.

Not surprisingly, liberals are more critical of the country than conversatives and middle-of-the-roaders, and black students are less enthusiastic about the country than are many whites. However, the racial differences showed up more in the reluctance of blacks to cite positive qualities than in their greater willingness to list negative ones.

The Times Survey of Historical Knowledge and Attitudes was developed in collaboration with Educational Testing Service and given to a carefully chosen cross section of students on 194 campuses last February. Their answers to 42 questions showed that their knowledge of the past was generally limited to "peak" events like the Declaration of Independence.

Statistical analysis showed many differences between students who scored well or poorly on the test. In general, men did better than women and whites better than blacks. Students educated in the south—both blacks and whites—did somewhat less well than those from other regions. In general, students tended to do better on specific questions relating to their own section of the country.

On one question in the attitude survey, students were given a list of 10 traits and asked how characteristic they thought each one was of the span of American history.

The trait of "materialism" transcended most differences of sex, political persuasion, or region. And even though black students did not select it quite as often as white students, they chose it above any of the other nine characteristics.

"IMMORALITY" LOWEST

The quality selected least often was "immorality." Only 11 percent thought of this as "very characteristic" of American history. The next lowest was "repression," which a slight majority, 52 percent, thought of as "somewhat characteristic," but only 12 percent put in the "very" category.

The other national traits—those in the middle after materialism, opportunity and democracy, were in order of preference: violence, justice, religiousness, generosity and inequality.

As a group, whites were more likely than blacks to give weight to the "positive" qualities. More than half the whites, for instance, said that "opportunity" was very characteristic of the American past, while only 29 percent of blacks thought so. The only "positive" trait that blacks thought of as more characteristic was religiousness.

However, the fact that blacks were less likely to pick positive traits did not mean

that they were more likely to pick negative ones. They were only slightly more willing than whites to cite repression, violence, inequality and immorality as characteristic of American history.

There were some rather sharp differences politically. Those who identified themselves as liberal were more likely to choose violence and inequality and less likely to select justice and democracy than those in the middle and on the right. Those on the right were more likely than the two other groups to cite generosity and opportunity.

The same general patterns appeared in responses to a question asking students to indicate which of 24 historical events they would include in a brief history as "particularly revealing" or "the character of that history."

Not surprisingly, the most commonly selected were the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the drafting of the Constitution, both of which were included by four-fifths of the students.

Others cited by at least half were in order: the Emancipation Proclamation, entry into the Korean war, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the founding of the American Federation of Labor and President Woodrow Wilson's proclamation of neutrality in 1914.

The item checked least was suppression of the Filipino revolt led by Emilio Aguinaldo from 1899 to 1902, which drew only 10 percent of the students. Others cited by less than a quarter were enactment of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, Shay's Rebellion (the 1786 protest by debt-ridden Massachusetts farmers), and the Credit Mobilier financial scandal of 1872 involving the Union Pacific Railway and top officials in the Grant Administration.

White students were considerably more likely than blacks to pick out major "textbook" events such as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, while blacks were more likely to select items relating to their own history. Sixty percent of blacks chose Nat Turner's Rebellion, for instance, in contrast to 25 percent of whites. Blacks also picked the assassination of President Kennedy more by a margin of 77 to 72 percent.

Analysts from Education Testing Service found a number of patterns relating to performance on the section of the survey dealing with historical knowledge.

MEN VERSUS WOMEN

Men, for instance, did consistently better than women. They had an overall mean score of 22, or 52 percent, of the 42 items correct, while women had a mean of 20.2 and a percentage score of 48.

Men did especially well on questions relating to diplomacy, economic matters and military history and, to a lesser extent, politics. The differences were marked, for example, on the questions regarding the Monroe Doctrine, Britain's defeat in the Revolution, the atomic bomb, and the Cold War. Men also outperformed women by 71 to 62 on the question about the feminist movement.

The only question on which women did clearly better than men was a "methods" question asking them to identify the movement of people from blue-collar to white-collar jobs as the best measure of social mobility in the early 20th century.

Whites did consistently better than blacks by an overall average of more than four questions. The white mean score was 21.6, or 51 percent, as opposed to 17.0, or 40 percent, for blacks.

Whites did somewhat better than blacks on the questions dealing with slavery and school desegregation, and on one "black history" question—dealing with black leaders—their margin of superiority was even higher than that for the test as a whole. The one question on which blacks performance was slightly better than whites dealt with parallels between the Korean and Vietnamese wars.

In interpreting these findings regarding sex and race, project personnel at Educational Testing Service noted that males and whites reported a number of background characteristics that, as a general rule, were associated with high scores. For instance, whites reported more exposure to "concepts" in their high-school course as well as a higher level of parental education. Fifty-nine percent of the white students' fathers had post-secondary education, compared with 30 percent for black students.

Nineteen percent of the black students were from vocational high-school programs compared with 10 percent of white students, and the black students tended to be older (30 percent over 20 years, against 15 percent for whites).

A high percentage of blacks—41 percent—were in the South, where scores as a whole were somewhat lower—for whites as well as blacks—than those of the rest of the country. The mean score among Southerners was 20.4, or 49 percent, while those elsewhere ranged from 21.3 to 21.5.

The differences between blacks and whites in socioeconomic factors may explain their difference in test scores, but they do not account for the test differences between men and women. The only background characteristics that seemed related to the lower performance of women students were that they were less likely than men to be history majors, to be taking a college-level history course, or to have liked their high-school history course. Curiously, they reported having higher history grades in high school than men.

Students tended to do especially well on issues related in some way to their own section of the country. Middle Westerners, for instance, achieved relatively high success on the questions involving German and Irish immigration, territories acquired by resolution of boundary disputes, and Henry Ford.

Likewise, Westerners did especially well on Mexican immigration. They also did substantially better than others on several events with no obvious relationship to their region—school desegregation, the Bill of Rights and Populism—while doing worse on religious toleration and the origin of trusts.

Easterners seemed to do best on matters of government and economic policy. They had relatively high success, for example, on progressivism, the New Deal, the Treaty of Versailles and collective bargaining.

Southerners did not do appreciably better on any questions, and they did relatively poorly on several—most notably the one on Reconstruction. Other questions on which Southerners were weak included those on collective bargaining, Italian and Russian immigration, and the New Deal.

HISTORY MAJORS HIGHEST

Scores were also analyzed in relation to the academic field that students said they were planning to enter. Not surprisingly, those intending to be history majors achieved the highest overall score—a mean of 24.3, or 58 percent.

The next-best performers were those majoring in mathematics or science and social science majors, which groups had mean scores of 22.3, or 53 percent. Three quarters of math and the natural science students were men, who achieved high scores generally.

Education majors—many of whom will presumably be teaching the next generation its history—scored near the bottom, with a mean score of 19.7, or 46 percent. Nearly three quarters of education majors were women, compared with only 32 percent of the history majors.

There was no notable difference in the overall performance of students from private schools (including parochial ones) as opposed to public schools. Freshmen who identified themselves as being on the left or right politically had an average combined score of 21.6, or one full point higher than those in the political middle.

Analysts also noted that the more the student knew about American history—as measured by the Times test—the more likely he or she was to think of the past in positive terms. And the less the student knew, the more likely he or she was to cite negative characteristics about the nation's past.

SCORES FOLLOWED NORMAL CURVE

(By Jonathan Friendly)

The scores students received on The New York Times American History Test clustered neatly under what statisticians call a normal, bell-shape curve—some very good students and some very bad students at the extremes and the rest in between.

For example, 101 of the 1,856 freshmen who took the test correctly answered 31 or more questions, while 93 of the students got 12 or fewer right answers. Two-thirds of the students fell in the range of 15 to 27 correct answers, a concentration that test analysts said strongly suggested that there was a normal distribution of good, medium and poor students and of easy, medium and hard questions.

By coincidence, half of the students got at least half of the questions (21 of 42) right, and half got at least half wrong.

In scoring the test, statisticians at Educational Testing Service followed their preferred practice and gave students a credit of one-quarter question correct for each one they omitted. The credit is based on the assumption that, had they guessed at an answer, they had a one in four chance of being right since there were four options in the multiple-choice format. In fact, very few students skipped a large number of questions.

NO CONSENSUS ON "GOOD"

As in many tests, there is no consensus on what constitutes a "good" score. The panel of four historians who were advisers to The Times and Educational Testing Service looked at the results in terms of each individual question. They felt the students had generally done well if 55 percent to 60 percent were correct on an item, but they were not satisfied with that percentage on basic questions about the best-known events.

A panel of 20 prominent Americans got an average of just over 19 correct answers on the first 24 questions, or about 50 percent better than the college freshmen's average of 13.5 on that section.

The chairmen of history departments or coordinators of social science of 18 high schools in and around six major cities said, on the average, that college-bound seniors should get at least 30 questions correct, a level actually achieved by only 138 of the 1,856 freshmen.

The students at the University of Texas in Arlington made the best group showing of any of the 194 colleges whose results were scored. The 11 Texas students got an average of 28.5 correct, with one student as high as 38 and one as low as 17.

TEST HELPS DRIVE HOME STUDENTS' SHORTCOMINGS

(By Jonathan Friendly)

Many of the students who took the New York Times American History Knowledge and Attitude Survey test reported, often with a mixture of shame or bitterness, that it had shown them how much history they did not know.

"After taking this," wrote one student at Belmont College in Nashville, "I think I need to go over my American history. There were several questions I was unsure of but feel I

should know because they were simply evident facts."

The students, who were asked to write their comments in the test booklet after they had finished the questions, explained their test performance in a number of ways.

"I place much of the blame for my ignorance on the New York City public school system," wrote a student at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. "To look at my grades I'm a success; to examine my actual knowledge, I'm a failure."

Many said that they had learned to memorize facts so that they could pass tests in high school, but that they had found that they had not retained the information. Because of this, a student at St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minn., said, she felt deprived.

"I should have known the answers to all these questions," she said. "I could take part of the blame myself, but I refuse to. The teachers that taught me in high school cheated me out of a good American history education."

Others, however, like a student at Central College in McPherson, Kan., said the subject was irrelevant; "Who cares what went on back then. We have enough to worry about in the future."

One common criticism was that the test slighted the history of minorities—blacks, Indians and women, in particular.

"I know that these groups have not played a large part in the history-making process of the United States of America," said a student at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, N. C., "but I personally would find history more interesting if it portrayed a more truthful picture of the heterogeneousness of American life."

NO "HAPPY TIMES"

"Women's rights were not covered very well, but they aren't covered well in American history classes," commented a freshman at the University of Texas in Austin. And, he added, "the survey generally covered disputes and conflict instead of the happy times that should be remembered in a Bicentennial survey."

The student's concern with minority history translated into a mixed pattern of achievement on the test questions about such topics. About two-thirds of the students knew when women gained the right to vote, and the same number knew the context of the 1954 school descegregation decision.

But, while 47 percent correctly identified the principal opponents in the early 20th century debate over civil rights and the education of blacks, fewer than one student in five knew the aim of Federal policies toward Indians in the late 19th century.

An undergraduate at Georgia Military College in Milledgeville said there should have been more emphasis on the armed forces of the nation, while from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville came the suggestion that there should have been more about westward expansion.

"This movement westward was, and is, the epitome of the American idea of opportunity and abundance that has served as a basis for our thinking up to the present time," the student said.

The students frequently said that more questions should have been asked about events since World War II—the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Vietnam, space exploration, former President Richard M. Nixon and Watergate were most often mentioned.

Some students were very detailed in their criticism.

An Amherst College freshman said it was "hard to do more than scratch the surface, but included should have been Marshall (important in a conceptual sense, i.e., his court)."

"Bryan and the silver issue should have been more specifically dealt with," he continued, "along with the agrarian revolt and, in a contemporary sense, the implications of alienation in our technocratic society."

At Ferrum College in Ferrum, Va., a freshman came to one conclusion: "Let's face it—DeTocqueville was right. We are mediocre, as doubtless this survey will indicate."

THE STUDENTS IN 1943 VERSUS THE STUDENTS NOW

(By Jonathan Friendly)

College freshmen know as much American history overall as did their counterparts 33 years ago, although the content of what they know has shifted somewhat.

An analysis suggests that if the students who took a New York Times American history test in 1943 had taken the 1976 test instead, they would have performed no better than the current freshmen did.

The results of the two tests cannot be compared directly, because much of the data from the first is no longer available, and it is impossible to say how that sample of students at 36 campuses compared to all freshmen then. The nature of student bodies has changed in the last three decades, first under pressure from returning World War II veterans, later with the proliferation of community colleges and such practices as open admissions.

The new test, however, repeated three items from the 1943 test. The students were asked to write down the names of the Presidents during five wars and to arrange two sets of four events in chronological order.

The ability to identify Lincoln as the Civil War President has increased, with 82 percent of the current freshmen correct on the item, compared with 75 percent in 1943. On the other hand, 70 percent of students in 1943 knew Wilson was President during World War I, compared with 49 percent now.

Both groups had almost identical scores on the three other war Presidents—13 percent for James Madison in the War of 1812 and for James K. Polk in the Mexican War; 16 percent for William McKinley in the Spanish-American war.

On one chronology item, the earlier students outscored the current ones, with 10 percent of the former placing in order the passage of the Homestead Act (1862), Civil Service reform (1883), the War with Spain (1898) and the inauguration of Theodore Roosvelt (1901). Only 3.5 percent of the present students got all four in order.

But today's students outscored their predecessors, 7.3 percent to 6 percent, on the other chronology item, which involved the Nullification Act (1832), the Mexican War (1846), the Compromise of 1850 (dealing with slavery), and the Dred Scott decision (1857).

Some of the new questions touched on themes from the earlier examination, but strict comparisons are risky because the new test required students to rcognize answers in multiple-choice format, while the earlier test required students to recall answers to fill in the blanks.

Forty-four percent of the students in 1943 were able to name two of the powers the Constitution specifically grants to Congress; 26 percent of today's freshmen recognized the regulation of interstate commerce as being one of those powers.

And, on a topic that illustrated a basic difference in the kind of knowledge the two tests tried to measure, 35 percent of the current students correctly identified the aim of the Open Door policy; in 1943, just 15 percent of the students knew that the title of the policy was Open Door.

VOTER POST CARD REGISTRATION

HON. HARRY F. BYRD, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Tuesday, September 7, 1976

Mr. HARRY F. BYRD, JR. Mr. President, in a recent editorial, the Richmond Times-Dispatch reviewed the recently passed post card voter registration bill and concluded:

The post card registration bill is another example of unnecessary Federal intervention into what is basically a State prerogative.

The Times-Dispatch further viewed with both humor and alarm the obvious potential for fraud and abuse which is inherent in this ill-considered proposal. The editor of the editorial page of the Richmond Times-Dispatch is Edward Grimsley. The publisher is David Tennant Bryan.

The editorial quotes Congressman DAWSON MATHIS, who said during the House debates that the Administrator of the proposed Voter Registration Administration should place unlimited quantities of voter registration forms "at the entrances and exits of cemeteries, graveyards, and other final resting places in this country," in order to facilitate what has been a widely used practice in the past; namely, the registration of dead persons.

Mr. President, enactment of this legislation will be bad for election ethics, but it could be a boon to employment. Thousands of unemployed persons could be gainfully, if illegally, employed registering the departed by a massive survey of the cemeteries of this country.

It should be called the tombstone voter registration bill. If it becomes law, and I hope that it will not, it will become known by that unfortunate, but descriptive title.

I ask unanimous consent that the editorial of the Richmond Times-Dispatch, "Postcard Registration," be printed in the Extensions of Remarks.

There being no objection, the editorial was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

POSTCARD REGISTRATION

There was both good and bad in the House of Representatives' recent action on the postcard voter registration bill.

The bad was that the bill was passed.

The good was that the House did amend the measure to eliminate the requirement that the Postal Service mail voter registration postcard forms to every household in the United States at least once every two years. The estimated cost of the program as originally conceived: as much as $500 million every two years.

Democratic presidential candidate Jimmy Carter (who allegedly wants to hold down government expenditures) visited Capitol Hill just prior to House action on the bill not only to lobby for the measure but also to urge that it be passed quickly so that the plan could be put into effect in time for the November 2 election.

But the House handed Mr. Carter his first legislative defeat by dropping the key provision for Postal Service mailing of the cards. Instead, under the amendment adopted, the cards would be made available at

post offices and other public buildings, as well as being given out in bulk to groups which request them.

While the amendment improves the bill, the measure is still a totally unjustified one that would add to federal bureaucracy by creating a new Voter Registration Administration. The postcards would permit registration only for federal elections, but the enormous burden placed on local registrars in maintaining separate federal and state lists would virtually force adoption of the system for state elections, too.

Noting that postcard registration could open the door to widespread fraud, Rep. Dawson Mathis, a Democrat from Jimmy Carter's home state of Georgia, offered an amendment to read:

"The administrator is authorized to place or cause to be placed, unlimited quantities of voter registration forms at the entrances and exits of all cemeteries, graveyards and other final resting places."

The amendment was defeated, despite Mr. Mathis' eloquent plea in its behalf. (See the adjoining box.)

The postcard registration proposal is another example of unnecessary federal intervention into what is basically a state prerogative. It is unsound in principle to take the view that it is asking too much of a citizen to go to the trouble of visiting a local registrar in exercising one of the fundamental rights of free people.

Postcard registration could not become law unless the Senate also passed the bill. We hope it doesn't get through that body. If it does, and if President Ford is in office at the time, it almost certainly will be vetoed.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Wednesday, September 8, 1976*

The House met at 12 o'clock noon.

The Chaplain, Rev. Edward G. Latch, D.D., offered the following prayer:

My soul waits upon God; from Him comes my salvation.—Psalms 62: 1.

God of grace and God of glory, in whose love we find the help we need and by whose wisdom we see the way we ought to take, give to these leaders of our Nation clear vision, clean hands, constructive minds, and creative hearts as they face the grave task and great responsibilities which confront them. Guide their spirits to give the best that they can give and steady their hearts to stand for what is right and good and against all that is wrong and bad.

By Thy grace may they live through this day in glad service, with inner peace and a loving heart.

In the spirit of the Master we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Without objection, the Journal stands approved.

There was no objection.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Marks, one of his secretaries, who also informed the House that on the following dates the President approved and signed bills of the House of the following titles:

On September 3, 1976:

H.R. 3052. An act to amend section 512(b)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 with respect to the tax treatment of the gain on the lapse of options to buy or sell securities;

H.R. 3650. An act to clarify the application of section 8344 of title 5, United States Code, relating to civil service annuities and pay upon reemployment, and for other purposes; and

H.R. 13679. An act to provide assistance to the Government of Guam, to guarantee certain obligations of the Guam Power Authority, and for other purposes.

On September 4, 1976:

H.R. 10370. An act to amend the act of January 3, 1975, establishing the Canaveral National Seashore; and

H.R. 11009. An act to provide for an independent audit of the financial condition of the government of the District of Columbia.

On September 7, 1976:

H.R. 12261. An act to extend the period during which the Council of the District of Columbia is prohibited from revising the criminal laws of the District; and

H.R. 12455. An act to amend title XX of the Social Security Act so as to permit greater latitude by the States in establishing criteria respecting eligibility for social services, to facilitate and encourage the implementation by States of child day care services programs conducted pursuant to such title, to promote the employment of welfare recipients in the provision of child day care services, and for other purposes.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Sparrow, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 6622. An act to provide for repair of the Del City aqueduct, a feature of the Norman Federal reclamation project, Oklahoma; and

H.R. 15371. An act to provide for protection of the spouses of major Presidential and Vice Presidential nominees.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the House to the bill (S. 217) entitled "An act to repeal the act of May 10, 1926 (44 Stat. 498), relating to the condemnation of certain lands of the Pueblo Indians in the State of New Mexico."

The message also announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 11407. An act to amend title 14, United States Code, to authorize the admission of additional foreign nationals to the Coast Guard Academy.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed bills of the following titles, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1821. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to construct, operate, and maintain the Kanopolis unit of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin program, Kansas, and for other purposes.

S. 2194. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to construct, operate, and maintain the McGee Creek project, Oklahoma, and for other purposes;

S. 3081. An act to amend section 301 of the Federal Meat Inspection Act, as amended, and section 5 of the Poultry Products Inspection Act, as amended, so as to increase from 50 to 80 percent the amount that may be paid as the Federal Government's share of the costs of any cooperative meat or poultry inspection program carried out by any State under such sections, and for other purposes; and

S. 3554. An act to establish a National Commission on Neighborhoods.

ANTI-ISRAEL BUSINESS PRACTICES MUST STOP

(Mr. ANDERSON of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDERSON of California. Mr. Speaker, the lead article in today's Los Angeles Times said that the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce has uncovered a shocking sale of $4.4 billion worth of goods to Arab nations covered by the Arab economic boycott of Israel.

The distinguished chairman of the subcommittee, and a colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. Moss), was quoted as saying "that inadequate steps by executive agencies in dealing with the boycott had compromised American principles of free trade and freedom from religious discrimination."

I agree, and also believe that strict legislation to combat the boycott is needed. In fact, I am a cosponsor of a bill introduced by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KOCH), and a member of the subcommittee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SCHEUER). This bill would "bar the participation by any American firm in the Arab boycott, by strengthening the Export Administration Act, which was specifically criticized by the subcommittee for being too lax "in requiring companies to file reports on boycott demands."

The Senate has already approved a similar bill—it is time the House do likewise.

PERMISSION FOR SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES OF COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION TO SIT TODAY AND FOR THE BALANCE OF THE WEEK DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Water Resources of the Commit-